



Afghan children follow Maj. Jondavid DuVall trying to sell magazines and other small items as he departs Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan. Major DuVall is deployed from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Channeling Change

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On an average day, Maj. Jondavid DuVall only visits his work tent on Camp Eggers long enough to check his e-mail and grab some breakfast to go. But, before departing the camp, he allows plenty of time to gear up — donning body armor, a helmet and weapons.

Unlike the majority of Airmen deployed in Afghanistan who live and work within a few feet of the flightline, Major DuVall works among the Afghan community daily.

As a member of the embedded training teams, or ETTs, the major and his group of Airmen work to teach and mentor soldiers in the Afghanistan National Army in Kabul.



There are approximately 20 teams, totaling about 150 Airmen, scattered throughout Afghanistan, instructing Afghan soldiers in communications, logistics, supply, medical, and training and education. The trick is, they aren't teaching the ANA how supply is done the Air Force way, but how the Army does it. Since the Airmen are filling Army shortfall positions, they must teach supply the Army way. Although ETTs fall administratively under the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group stationed at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, the ETTs work alongside other NATO trainers to teach the Afghan army how to be self sufficient.

Just outside camp gates, the major is immediately bombarded by a group of Afghan children. They enthusiastically greet him in broken English, trying to sell their wares — some days it's gum — others it's English-Dari dictionaries. After appeasing the children with gifts of fruit or muffins, the major and his team pick up their translator and head out to one of the 19 depots they're responsible for. This is where the protective gear is vital.

And according to Major DuVall, driving outside the wire isn't always the most pleasant experience, but it's made the deployment a memorable one.

"There are phone calls not to drive down a certain road, to hold in a

certain position, change direction — or the occasional experience of driving up on an improvised explosive device," said the major who serves as the senior mentor to the ANA Central Supply Depot commander.

"By the time my team leaves Kabul, we will have traveled approximately 5,625 miles — completing more than 500 short-tactical convoys," Maj. Kenneth Heath said. He serves as the Central Workshop senior mentor, leading an 18-person team responsible for mentoring the commander and senior leaders of the Central Workshop supporting eight locations spread throughout Kabul.

Getting to those locations is an experience all in itself.

"I saw a one-legged man begging in the middle of the street get hit by a taxi," Master Sgt. Martin Fox said. He was amazed when the man used his crutch to hit the taxi and break its window. "This was a great example of these peoples' spirit. He could have just laid on the ground wanting sympathy, but instead he attacked the cab."

When the teams arrive at the depots, it typically takes 15 minutes to greet all of the ANA soldiers — each receiving a greeting, a handshake and sometimes even a hug — an Afghan custom.

"Being here and building friendships with the ANA is absolutely the best," Major DuVall said. "They're good people who want the

Colonel Ewaz (right) opens his gun case after Maj. Jondavid DuVall issues the Afghanistan National Army Central Supply Depot commander his pistol. Major DuVall is the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group embedded training team mentor to the colonel.

best for their country."

The major said it's been an honor to be a part of this operation because he can appreciate how far they've come.

"They are striving for knowledge and new ways," he said. "Years of oppression by the Russians and Taliban have taken their toll on this once beautiful country and its people."

For the once enlisted fuels troop, the major said the best experience he's had on this deployment was mentoring Colonel Ewaz, the ANA Central Supply Depot commander, on how to run an 800-man depot.

"He's a man who wants to bring change to his country and army," Major DuVall said. "He speaks beautifully of his country's future amidst the looming corruption he sees in the army and government."

Though the colonel knows he may never see the drastic changes he dreams of, with the help of the ETTs, he hopes his grandchildren will. 🇦🇫